

2012 Public Safety Budget Community Conversations

Table 1 with Councilmember Godden - Summary of Responses
Monday, May 23, 2011, Delridge Community Center

SUMMARY:

- Communication
- Education
- Citizen participation

Question 1: Public safety - police and fire - is an important City service, funded entirely by city tax dollars and historically one of the last places the City makes budget reductions. This means larger cuts must be taken from other important city services, like libraries, human services and parks, some of which have some other funding sources and some of which do not. Should the City continue to prioritize public safety funding, and why?

- Could reduce expenses by community court—community service
- Need to clean up graffiti
- Small programs—partnered with community can reduce staffing costs (youth run elderly programs)
- Communication gap between citizens and police/fire
- Can't really trade off safety with other services (parks)
- Most start using community center DOC work crews
- Can cut costs with volunteers—do maintenance

Question 2: What City-funded services contribute to a feeling of safety in your neighborhood? How might these tight budget times change the way the City thinks about how to address crime and how to address the factors that contribute to criminal activity?

- Block watch- citizen participation and partnership
- Foot beats- see officers walking around or on bikes – they're quicker, lighting (street lights) would help
- Park rangers, clean-up of wild areas w/criminal element

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Question 3: Which of these goals for a police department is most important to you, and why?

- a. Reduce crime**
 - b. Reduce the fear of crime**
 - c. Respond quickly to 911 calls for service**
 - d. Provide public safety services cost-effectively**
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- Provide public safety services cost-effectively
 - Responding quickly to 911—emergent need, expect help quickly
 - Reducing crime—easier for quick 911 response
 - As responding quickly can be larger problem, people might not call
 - Chinatown- crime type, drug pushing, there is a fear of crime, affects business, travel
 - Fear of crime: jungle under I-5, loitering (in order to do drug deals or commit crimes), slow response to 911
 - Block watch program is good, shouldn't have been discontinued (might not work as well in the CID, very urban area), W. Seattle "be prepared", on-line presence with SW precinct
 - Need to start staffing for calls to service
 - Officers need to get to know kids apart from law enforcement
 - Would be good for officers to be multi-lingual
 - Can ask a on 911 for interpreter—Mandarin
 - There are avenues to partner with police and fire. (For example: CPR)
 - Change hours of beat cops for when crime is worst
 - Responding quickly to 911
 - Reducing crime
 - All are inundated and we need a solution
 - Address loitering—get police response to crime
 - Need citizen-precinct partnership
 - Need prevention programs
 - Deploy resources to meet needs (shift changes)

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Question 4: Other than core police and fire department functions, what other public safety programs do you consider most important? (Examples include domestic violence programs, block watch coordination, drug diversion programs, etc.)

- We need a larger solution to drugs
- Programs to prevent recidivism, like business watches
- What are drug good programs? – skeptical
- Need national solution
- CORE programs—help and education
- Change shift times for beat cops
- Drugs – Chinatown
- Panhandling – downtown with tourists
- Scanners pick up police call and hear call and scatter
- Must enforce loitering law

Question 5: Would you be willing to pay more in taxes to avoid a reduction in services to the fire department?

- Yes, we'd pay higher taxes or perhaps a local service district for an especially troubled area